

**REMARKS**

**I. Status of Application**

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-8 have been rejected.

**II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Swensen (US 5,420,883), hereinafter referred to as “Swensen”, and further in view of Lonn (NPL 1999), hereinafter referred to as “Lonn”, Fuhrmann (US 2003/0067873 A1), hereinafter referred to as “Fuhrmann”, and Keller (US 7,200,233 B1), hereinafter referred to as “Keller”. Applicant respectfully traverses all of these rejections.

All of the above rejections of claims 1-8 rely on the cited Keller reference. However, since the priority date of the present application (October 7, 2002) is earlier than the U.S. filing date of the cited Keller reference (December 10, 2002), Keller is not even prior art, and the § 103 rejections are improper. Accordingly, Applicant submits herewith a verified translation of the priority document (FR Application No. 02 12 404) in order to perfect the claim for priority. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of claims 1-8 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

**III. Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

/ Andrew J. Taska /

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